

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
EDINA HERITAGE PRESERVATION BOARD  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2008, AT 7:00 P.M.  
EDINA CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM  
4801 WEST 50<sup>TH</sup> STREET**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Bob Kojetin, Karen Ferrara, Chris Rofidal, Lou Blemaster, Laura Benson, Jean Rehkamp Larson, Connie Fukuda, Nancy Scherer, and Sara Rubin

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Joyce Repya, Associate Planner

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Robert Vogel, Preservation Consultant  
Tom Mason, 4622 Drexel Avenue  
Brandon Merrill, MA Peterson Design Build  
Joe Sullivan, 4504 Casco Avenue  
Cheryl Dulas, 4609 Bruce Avenue

**I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: January 8, 2008**

Member Rofidal moved approval of the Minutes from the January 8, 2008 meeting. Member Scherer seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

**II. COUNTRY CLUB DISTRICT:**

**A. Certificates of Appropriateness (COA)**

**1. H-08-1 4622 Drexel Avenue  
Changes to a COA previously approved for a new home**

Planner Repya reported that the subject property is located on the west side of the 4600 block of Drexel Avenue. The existing home, constructed in 1941 is identified as a Neo-Colonial. A two stall, front loading garage is located on the north side of the house.

On October 26, 2006, the Heritage Preservation Board approved a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the existing home and build a new home. Since that time, the project was abandoned, the property was sold, and a new plan for the home is now proposed.

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The subject request addresses new construction which includes removing the existing attached garage and replacing it with a new attached, front-loading, 2 stall garage; recessed 8.33 feet from the front building wall. The existing hip roof is proposed to be replaced with a new, higher pitched roof with gable ends on all four elevations. An 850 square foot, 2-story addition is proposed to be added to the rear of the home - set back 3.96 from the south building wall of the existing home, and 15.46 feet from the southerly lot line; 43 feet from the rear (or westerly) lot line; and 14 feet from the north lot line.

The property owner has indicated that the plans are influenced by the English Cottage architectural style; utilizing a massed square ground plan configuration. The roof pitch is proposed to be changed from low, hip style to a higher pitch with ridge lines and gable ends, in an attempt to more closely match the pitch of surrounding homes. The exterior finishes proposed are tumbled stone, cedar shakes and cedar trim, with asphalt shingles.

Planner Repya observed that an important element when reviewing home construction in the Country Club District, in addition to the architectural style, is to determine how the home will compare in size and massing to the adjacent homes. The following comparison of the elevations at the street, first floor and ridge line for the subject home and the adjacent homes to both the north and south were provided:

<u>Address</u>	<u>Street</u>		<u>1st Floor</u>		<u>Ridge Line</u>	
<b>4620 - north</b>	887.66	(+9.3')	896.69	(+26.5')	923.22	-
<b>4622 - proposed</b>	886.53	(+8.3')	894.87	(+27.6')	922.47 (919.98 original)	
<b>4624 - south</b>	886.32	(+8.1')	894.42	(+27')	921.48	

Note: The difference in grade from street to 1<sup>st</sup> floor and 1<sup>st</sup> floor to ridge line is indicated in parentheses.

Comparisons for the building heights of the subject and adjacent homes demonstrate the following:

(Measurements taken from grade, not 1<sup>st</sup> floor elevation.)

<u>Address</u>	<u>Highest Peak</u>	<u>Eave Line</u>
<b>4620 – north</b>	27'7"	16'5"
<b>4622 – proposed</b>	28'7"	17'7" (original home 25'5" peak, 19'2" eave)
<b>4624 – south</b>	26'4"	20'4"

Preservation Consultant Robert Vogel reviewed the plans submitted with the Certificate of Appropriateness application and opined that a new COA is required because the proposed work will obliterate the existing house (while recycling some of its structural components) and replace it with an entirely new architectural creation.

The design does not attempt to imitate a particular architectural style or period, but interprets both the Colonial and Tudor styles as well as some notable Midwestern vernacular themes that are also reflected in older homes in the district. The overall impression is of a Neo-Eclectic house consciously designed to be compatible with adjacent historic facades—it certainly makes an interesting transition between the neighboring homes.

Mr. Vogel explained that the composition of the façade is based on traditional rather than modern shapes and textures, and in his opinion, the designer did an excellent job of integrating the attached, front-loading garage with the rest of the facade. Vogel noted that the compound plan, with its combination of side and front-facing gables (a form referred to as “cross-gabled”), is a characteristic shared by numerous Tudor Revival homes in the district, which also often have mixed wall cladding materials. The open entry porch is a very nice touch because it helps offset the mass of the façade (builders in the 1920s-30s installed the same porches/porticoes on both Colonial Revival and Tudor style houses throughout the district). The wood brackets under the eaves are neither Colonial nor Tudor inspired, at least in an architectural history sense, but decorative brackets can be seen on Italian Renaissance styled homes in the district (where many of the Tudors have “colonial” decorative shutters) and here they are placed in a somewhat inconspicuous location.

Mr. Vogel concluded that he would recommend approval of the COA for new construction, subject to the plans presented and a 2008 year built plaque be displayed on the exterior of the home.

### **FINDINGS:**

Planner Repya provided the following findings:

- The proposed new construction is architecturally compatible in scale, building materials, and texture with the nearby historic homes and the streetscape.
- The historic integrity of nearby historic facades will not be impaired.
- The plans provided with subject request clearly illustrate the scale and scope of the project.
- The information provided supporting the subject Certificate of Appropriateness meets the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and the Country Club Plan of Treatment

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Ms. Repya concluded that staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the new construction subject to:

- The plans presented, and
- The condition that a year built plaque or sign is placed on the structure.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:**

Member Blemaster

- Questioned the placement of the garage on the front elevation of the home; recalling that under the original plan for the district, Samuel Thorpe required that the garage not be visible from the front street.
- Cautioned the Board to be careful when making suggestions - not to redesign the home – the homeowner needs to have choices.

Member Scherer

- Reiterated Member Blemaster's concern regarding the placement of the front loading garage, and added that the front elevation has so many elements in play that the plan appears hodge-podge to her.

Member Rehkamp Larson

- Observed that the plan demonstrates great scale and massing. The form also works with the plan. The original house structure will be maintained. The front facing garage is not a problem – it has been set back from the front building wall to reduce the impact on the front elevation and sits below a lower hip roof. And the front entry has good proportion.
- Questioned whether the following details were in keeping with the historic neighborhood:
  1. The eave/overhang on the front gable has a large boxed piece that might be reduced.
  2. The garden gate on the front south elevation is connected to the eave and could be more connected to the house.
  3. Tongue and groove siding – could it be setting a precedence?
- Questioned whether this plan would be setting a precedence for future requests for new construction from an historic context.

Member Ferrara

- Observed that the Board needs to be sensitive to a homeowner's preferences for materials and design as long as what is proposed falls within the suggested design guidelines
- Pointed out that when looking at changes which have taken place in the district, it is very difficult to determine precedence.

Member Kojetin

- Pointed out that it is the responsibility of the Board to evaluate the plans as they relate to the criteria set out in the plan of treatment.

Member Fukuda

- Observed that the plans appear to meet the criteria of the plan of treatment.

Member Benson

- Observed that it is important that the neighbors have had an opportunity to review the plans and that their concerns have been addressed.

**HOMEOWNER COMMENTS: Tom Mason , Spyglass Properties**

Responding to questions from the Board, the owner/contractor, Tom Mason explained the following:

- The existing home has a front loading garage, and because there is not enough room on the side of the home for a driveway to access a garage in the rear of the home, we have attempted to lessen the impact of the garage by recessing it from the front building wall.
- The existing pitch of the roof is very low compared with the neighboring homes. The new gabled roof was designed to be more in keeping with the surrounding historic architecture.
- The stone veneer proposed for the façade is a natural tumbled stone.
- As the plans for the home were designed, meetings were held with city staff, preservation consultant, and abutting neighbors.

**MOTION:**

Member Ferrara moved approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness application, subject to the plans presented and a year date plaque be affixed to the exterior of the home. Member Kojetin seconded the motion.

**DISCUSSION:**

Member Rehkamp Larson stated that she was pleased with the overall design of the home, however would be more comfortable if the following changes were considered:

1. Reworking the front overhanging eave and removing the box on either end.
2. The peak of the rear addition is about six inches higher than the peak of the existing home. To bring the addition peak in line with the home would be a refinement to the plan.

Mr. Mason explained that the larger overhang eave was designed to prevent ice dam problems which can occur with smaller eaves. Also, the higher ridge of the addition is not visible from the front street due to the grading of the lot. However, he stated that he could agree to Ms. Rehkamp Larson's suggestions.

**VOTE:**

Following a brief discussion, Member Ferrara amended her motion to include Member Rehkamp Larson's two suggestions. Member Kojetin agreed to the

amended motion. Members Rofidal, Benson, Fukuda, Scherer, Ferrara, Kojetin and Rubin voted aye. Member Blemaster voted nay, pointing out that she did not agree with the front facing garage. The motion carried.

**2. H-08-2 4629 Bruce Avenue**  
**Construct a new 2-car detached garage**

Planner Repya explained that the subject property is located on the east side of the 4600 block of Bruce Avenue. The existing home is an English Tudor style constructed in 1935. A 2-car detached garage is located in the southeast corner of the rear yard, accessed by a driveway running along the south property line.

The subject request involves demolishing the existing 583.7 square foot detached garage which was constructed in 1999, and building a new, 583.7 square foot detached garage in the same location. The plan illustrates the new structure will continue to maintain 5 foot setback from the rear lot line and 6.4 foot setback from the south side lot line. A new curb cut is not required since the existing driveway will provide access to the proposed garage.

Ms. Repya pointed out that the new 2 stall detached garage is proposed to have the same footprint as the garage to be demolished; 24' 2"x 24'2" or 583.7 square feet in area. The design of the structure is proposed to compliment the architectural style of the home. Attention to detail is demonstrated on all four elevations. Stucco siding with trim boards applied in a similar style found on the front of the home is proposed for the walls, and shake shingles are proposed for the roof.

The height of the proposed garage is shown to be 21 feet at the highest peak, 15.5 feet at the mid-point of the gable, and 9 feet at the eave line. The ridge line is shown to be 25.5 feet in length. Furthermore, the lot coverage for the property with the proposed garage will not change since the proposed garage will be no larger than the existing garage.

The proponent has provided information regarding characteristics of garages to the south and east of the subject property. The data indicates that the property to the south, (4628 Arden Avenue) has a 488 square foot detached garage with a hip roof measuring 12.75 feet to the peak, set back 5 feet from the shared property line. The detached garage for the home to the south (4631 Bruce Avenue) measures 540 square feet in area and 26 feet in height to the peak; it is situated in the southeast corner of the yard approximately 28 feet from the shared lot line shared with the subject property.

Preservation Consultant Vogel reviewed the plans and observed that the drawings submitted with the subject Certificate of Appropriateness application demonstrate that the new garage will match the 1935 Tudor dwelling very well. The existing wood fence in back screens the lower part of the east (rear) elevation, where the texture of the exterior wall finish and the gable-end treatment

are sufficient, and will add enough visual character to the only wall that lacks windows/doors. It is a good design and the shed-roofed dormers are an interesting touch – Country Club Tudors often have these little shed dormers.

Mr. Vogel recommended approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the new garage with the condition that a year built sign or plaque be placed somewhere on the structure to differentiate it as new construction.

### **FINDINGS:**

Planner Repya presented the following findings:

- The plans provided with subject request clearly illustrate the scale and scope of the project.
- The information provided supporting the subject Certificate of Appropriateness meets the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and the Country Club Plan of Treatment

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Ms. Repya concluded that Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the new garage subject to:

- The plans presented, and
- The condition that a year built plaque or sign is placed on the structure.

### **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:**

#### Members Scherer and Blemaster

- Inquired about the upstairs room – what it would be used for and how it would be accessed?

#### Member Rehkamp Larson

- Stated that she thought the garage plan was great.

#### Member Rofidal

- Stated that he liked the plan, however questioned the 21 foot height of the roof considering the garage to the east was only 14 feet high. Member Rehkamp Larson explained that she lived in the home to the east and the 7 foot height difference between the two garages did not bother her.

### **APPLICANT'S COMMENTS:** Brandon Merrill, MA Peterson Design Build

- Responding to the questions about the upstairs room, Mr. Merrill explained that the upstairs will be accessed by stairs – it will not be insulated and will be used for storage.

**MOTION AND VOTE:**

Following a brief discussion, Member Rehkamp Larson moved approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness request to build a new detached garage subject to the plans presented and the condition that a year built plaque be placed on the exterior of the structure. Member Benson seconded the motion. Members Ferrara, Blemaster, Kojetin, Rubin, and Fukuda voted aye. Members Rofidal and Scherer voted Nay. The motion carried.

**B. Survey Progress Report – January**

Consultant Vogel reported that most of the work during the first half of the month was spent preparing for the HPB meeting on January 8 and the HPC-City Council workshop on January 15.

Review and organization of the survey data continued with the goal to assemble an update the list of all of the homes in the district with each property's street address, date of construction, architectural classification, and statement of significance (contributing or noncontributing).

Work also continued to revise the plan of treatment to reflect comments received from members of the city council and city staff. Some additional research was required relating to definition of terms and the policy implications of some of the plan features.

Board members thanked Mr. Vogel for his report.

**III. COUNTRY CLUB DISTRICT OPEN HOUSE - February 25th**

Board members discussed the format and information that would be provided at the February 25<sup>th</sup> open house. It was agreed that research data should be presented as well as the possible changes to the plan of treatment. Members emphasized that this would be an opportunity for the residents of the neighborhood to learn about the research data and provide a forum for the HPB to listen to resident concerns and vision for their neighborhood.

All agreed that a notice of the open house should be mailed to all residents as well as providing a press release. It was suggested that emphasis be made in the notice that "possible changes to the plan of treatment could have an impact on contemplated changes to the exterior of the homes." Planner Repya stated that she would ensure that the notices will be sent no less than 10 days prior to the open house.

**IV. OTHER BUSINESS:**

**A. Joint Meeting with City Council – January 15<sup>th</sup>: Outcome Discussion**



Board members discussed their reflections of the meeting with the Council Members.

Member Rofidal

- Received the impression that some of the council members preferred maintaining the contributing and non-contributing designations for the properties, but at the same time they would prefer the regulations be the same for both designations.
- Need to keep in mind that we are entering into a new era – the older homes are expensive to maintain and it might not always be in the best interest of the district to have a blanket prohibition of tear downs.
- Have spoken with some residents of the district who do not want a restriction to the tear down of homes.

Member Scherer

- Four homes have been torn down in the district since the landmark designation in 2003, which is a small number. However, a large number of new homes could change the character of the district.
- If the tear down of homes is permitted, the Board needs better guidance when reviewing the plans.

Member Blemaster

- It may appear the plan of treatment is vague, however it needs to be to provide individuality and creativity within the historic framework.
- It is through the Certificate of Appropriateness process that the integrity of the district will be maintained.
- It is encouraging that some of the builders associated with Certificates of Appropriateness have been very sensitive to the input from the neighborhood.
- It is important that new buyers in the district are educated about the landmark designation and the responsibilities associated with that.

Member Kojetin

- The responsibility for education about the landmark designation lies with the HPB, but also the realtors, home sellers and the neighborhood in general.

Member Rehkamp Larson

- Observed that it is the broader elements of massing and scale that give the district its character.
- Would like clarification of the design guidelines regarding which elements are recommended and which are discouraged. It is important to make expectations clear.

Consultant Vogel

- It is imperative to know what is being preserved.

- Preservation education is a consistent struggle in landmark districts because the stakeholders come and go. The historic information needs to be continually available.
- It should not be the HPB job to prohibit change – the to control new construction to ensure the historic integrity of the district is maintained.
- The concern for a large number of teardowns just isn't there. With the rate of four tear downs in five years in a district of 550 homes, the rate of change would take hundreds of years.
- Residents are doing an excellent job of maintaining the character of the district.

**V. CONCERN OF RESIDENTS:**

**Joe Sullivan – 4504 Casco Avenue**

Mr. Sullivan expounded upon a letter to the editor he submitted to the Edina Sun Current regarding the possible restriction of tear downs in the district, stating the following:

- Preservation in the district is a difficult job due to its subjectiveness.
- The district has been evolving for 80 years, and has been well maintained.
- He has been a resident for 2 years and was attracted due to the location, sidewalks and young families, not necessarily the architectural styles of the homes.
- The regulations need to be pragmatic – the houses are aged and won't last forever.
- The regulations should not over mandate – the residents should be encouraged to invest in their properties.
- Some older residents in the district are afraid of change.
- The importance of a neighborhood is people.
- His home has had numerous poorly constructed additions, which over time will require that he make a considerable investment to create a safe and more livable home, which will enhance the neighborhood.
- The residents in the district need to be comfortable with the HPB.

**Cheryl Dulas – 4609 Bruce Avenue**

Ms. Dulas shared the following concerns:

- There are some homes in the district that deserve to be preserved, such as the 8 model homes built by Mr. Thorpe.
- For the most part, the residents of the district have voluntarily maintained the historic integrity of their homes when undertaking changes to their homes. It is the speculative buyer, particularly on the smaller lots on the

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- east side of the district who have demonstrated a disregard for the history of the district.
- Ms. Dulas questioned the precedence for demolishing homes in the district.

VI.     **CORRESPONDENCE:**     None

VII.    **NEXT MEETING DATE:**    March 11, 2008

VIII.   **ADJOURNMENT**    10:00 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**  
***Joyce Repya***